



Strategic Communications, Business Development, Public Affairs

## Facsimile

TO: FARA  
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FROM: The Tool Shed Group LLC

DATE: 1/26/11

RE: Registrant 5916

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The following op-ed was recently submitted by The Tool Shed Group LLC (Registrant #5916) to the Huffington Post.

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This is embarrassing to say the least. Even more embarrassing is that at a time when the deficit of America's diplomatic talent is painfully evident, Senators Boxer and Menendez are blocking President Obama's nominee for ambassadorship to Azerbaijan because of domestic pressure from Armenian-American organizations. The nominee, Matthew Bryza, is a professional diplomat and an expert on this complex region. He is also an individual whose reputation amongst Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Europeans is beyond reproach. Perhaps, the silver lining

and a badge of honor for Bryza is that none of these rather embarrassing cables so far has been signed by him.

It is, indeed, an odd world in which we live when U.S. domestic political considerations allow American officials to welcome and honor a separatist leader from Azerbaijan's occupied territories to the United States, while at the same time the U.S. State Department has been threatening a full range of sanctions against Armenia for selling weapons to Iran that were then used to kill U.S. troops in Iraq. Reality doesn't seem matter that much here because the said separatist leader was welcomed as "president" in spite of traveling in his personal capacity on his Republic of Armenia passport and neither that U.S. nor any other country, including Armenia itself, even recognize the separatist entity.

In order to help Armenia and Azerbaijan move forward and for future OSCE summits to be truly positive and pro-Armenian, as well as pro-Azerbaijani and pro-long-term peace and prosperity in the region, the U.S. should think strategically, get its act together and push Armenia to do the same.

With a responsible and integrated Armenia, free of its isolationist policies that have landed the nation into the warm arms of its usury benefactors, Iran and Russia, Armenia will share in the wealth, progressiveness and prosperity of the region. If Armenia wants to throw off the shackles of its Third World existence, it needs only to open its eyes and ally itself with the U.S., the West and make peace.

As for the U.S.'s esteemed Department of State, it is clearly time to get professional and get some new blood.

***Jason Katz is the principal of the TSGroup, a consultancy that advises foreign governments, corporations and NGO's, including the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He is also the former head of Public Affairs for the American Jewish Committee.***